

CALIFORNIA STATE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH

WALTER M. DICKIE, M.D., Director

Weekly Bulletin



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Entered as second-class matter February 21, 1922, at the post office at Sacramento, California, under the Act of August 24, 1912.
Acceptance for mailing at special rate of postage provided for in Section 1103, Act of October 3, 1917.

Vol. XVIII, No. 49

December 30, 1939

GUY P. JONES
EDITOR

The Work of the California State Department of Public Health

In a few months the California State Department of Public Health shall have attained the venerable age of three score and ten, having been established by law April 15, 1870. During the early years of its existence, its purposes and duties were decidedly limited, as the public health laws were without teeth, and it was not until the late seventies and eighties that forceful legislation pertaining to public health was enacted.

Specific acts to provide for work along definite lines began to appear on the statutes about 1905, when the State Bacteriological Laboratory, the Bureau of Vital Statistics and the Bureau of Foods and Drugs came into existence by statute. It was in that year that the present organization of the California State Department of Public Health began to take form. Since that time, various activities have been added, until there are now a multitude of duties and activities that are performed.

In a recent issue of the Weekly Bulletin, a partial list of such activities was printed. This has now been expanded so as to cover practically all of the activities of the department, and it is published here in response to many requests.

SOME OF THE THINGS THE DEPARTMENT DOES TO KEEP THE PUBLIC WELL:

1. Investigates epidemics of communicable diseases and provides assistance in their control.

2. Provides consultive services in the diagnosis of communicable diseases.

3. Receives reports of communicable diseases declared reportable by law, and compiles morbidity statistics.

4. Makes community surveys among children and young adults to determine prevalence of malaria by means of blood tests or spleen examinations.

5. Conducts intensive study into the cause of influenza, through cooperation with the Rockefeller Foundation.

6. Provides laboratory tests for psittacine birds, inspects commercial aviaries, and issues permits to ship tested birds, that are psittacosis free, into other states.

7. Makes bacteriological examinations of water supplies suspected of contamination.

8. Conducts campaigns for the destruction of ground squirrels and rats, to protect the public against diseases carried by these rodents.

9. Makes surveys of rabid animals, upon local request, and outlines procedures for establishment of quarantine districts, as provided by law.

10. Conducts studies into the prevalence and types of lobar pneumonia in California, through assistance of the Federal government.

11. Makes surveys to determine the locations of mosquito breeding places, with recommendations for control measures in programs for prevention of malaria.

12. Makes special investigations into outbreaks of food poisoning, in which foods are suspected as causative factors.

13. Supervises venereal disease clinics throughout the State.
14. Supervises the purity of public water supplies.
15. Supervises the proper disposal of sewage.
16. Supervises cleanliness of shellfish, including oysters and clams.
17. Supervises activities of 25 mosquito abatement districts for the control of malaria.
18. Maintains supervision of sanitation in eating places and soft drink stands along the highways.
19. Inspects and regulates local garbage dumps to maintain sanitation and rodent control.
20. Investigates industrial plants to eliminate hazards and to protect the health of the working man.
21. Maintains its bureaus and divisions organized for emergency disasters, such as fire, flood, earthquake, or major catastrophies.
22. Maintains a rodent plague survey continuously, in order to determine plague foci.
23. Makes bacteriological examinations to assist physicians of rural districts in diagnosis of disease.
24. Distributes free of cost to physicians "drops" to be placed in the eyes of newly-born babies, to prevent blindness.
25. Distributes antigens and antisera, for laboratory use, at cost of production.
26. Produces and distributes typhoid vaccine, without charge, to practitioners of medicine and health officers.
27. Distributes to clinics and physicians, free of charge, drugs for the treatment of venereal diseases for patients who are unable to pay for such drugs.
28. Lends motion picture films pertaining to maternal and child hygiene and the prevention and control of venereal diseases for showing before local groups.
29. Maintains standards for foods and drugs.
30. Maintains high qualities in California wines and liquors.
31. Supervises the sanitation and controls standards for canned vegetables, meat and fish products.
32. Enforces the Sanitary Bakery Law, which requires standards for sanitation and maintenance of quality standards for bread and other products.
33. Supervises cold storage warehouses and issues licenses.
34. Analyzes food products delivered to State institutions in order to insure compliance with standards specified in contracts.
35. Files and indexes all birth, death and marriage certificates in the State, and issues copies upon request.
36. Helps to organize and maintain full time public health services in rural counties.
37. Keeps three motor units with doctor, nurse, and sanitarian on each to control communicable diseases, and provide medical and nursing relief for migrants, with Federal assistance.
38. Maintains nutritionists to advise migratory laboring population and other groups on proper foods and their preparation.
39. Maintains a tuberculosis motor clinic equipped with X-ray equipment for use among migratory laboring population and other groups.
40. Places in quarantine foods and drugs that are suspected as unfit for human consumption and destroys such lots as are determined unfit.
41. Inspects and issues licenses to walnut shelling plants, to insure provision of only clean sanitary nutmeats for public consumption.
42. Enforces laws that regulate the importance of eggs and egg products from other states and foreign countries.
43. Inspects both "on sale" and "off sale" retail liquor establishments, in order to determine that the provisions of the Pure Food Law are observed.
44. Makes inspections of used-bottle washing plants and issues licenses to those that conform to required standards.
45. Instructs children in the rural districts on proper care of the teeth.
46. Searches for crippled children and conducts diagnostic clinics for them.
47. Provides treatment for needy crippled children to correct their handicaps.
48. Inspects and licenses maternity homes and hospitals to maintain high standards of service and care.
49. Supervises tuberculosis hospitals in order to maintain high standards of care.
50. Issues certificates of approval to clinical laboratories that conform to required standards.
51. Inspects and issues licenses to hospitals that operate under the nonprofit hospital act.
52. Inspects and issues permits to approved medical clinics.
53. Examines laboratory technicians and issues certificates to those who qualify.
54. Examines public health nurses and issues certificates to those who qualify.
55. Provides a statistical service covering births, deaths, marriages and reportable diseases, for use of educators and research workers.
56. Provides for issuance of birth certificates for adopted children, citing foster parents as parents of adopted child.
57. Provides for issuance of birth certificates for foundlings.
58. Receives affidavits for amendment of birth, death, and marriage certificate; applies same to original record, and advises local registrars of vital statistics.
59. Issues permits for disinterment and removal without the State of bodies dead from certain infectious diseases.
60. Receives reports of bodies of unclaimed dead, and arranges for distribution of such bodies to medical schools for scientific educational purposes.
61. Makes rules and regulations for the transportation of dead bodies.

62. Publishes and distributes a Weekly Bulletin to health officers, nurses, teachers, physicians, welfare organizations, libraries, universities and interested individuals.

63. Publishes and distributes a biennial report, covering all of its activities during the two-year period.

64. In cooperation with the University of California Medical School, provides intensive post-graduate training in obstetrical and pediatric branches of medicine.

65. Distributes printed educational material upon a wide range of public health subjects.

66. Prepares radio scripts upon public health subjects, and arranges for broadcasts as required.

67. Through social security funds, employs a large group of public health nurses, whose services are available in communities where funds are lacking for employment of nurses.

68. Provides physical examinations of infants and children in the rural districts, assisted by local physicians.

69. Distributes pamphlets and literature on child care, and maternal and infant care.

70. Issues series of infant care letters, one each month during first year of life.

71. Issues a series of prenatal letters to prospective mothers, sending one letter each month before birth of child.

72. Maintains a demonstration in maternity delivery service, employing four public health nurses in such demonstration.

73. Employs two full-time pediatricians for special services in sections of the State where little or no provision is made for child or maternal welfare.

74. Employs two full-time pediatricians to supervise and arrange for child health conferences in local communities.

75. Maintains nutritional services to nurses, teachers and parents, relative to the selection of proper foods for both mothers and children.

76. Provides lectures covering maternal and child hygiene before county medical and dental societies.

77. Provides advisory and consultant services in public health nursing to local health departments and public health nurses in counties where such services are lacking.

78. Helps public health agencies to obtain qualified public health nurses for local employment.

79. Examines and issues certificates to trained attendants.

80. Conducts regional conferences for public health nurses, in order that they may be informed of advances in public health nursing and may be refreshed in their academic viewpoints.

81. Enforces special regulations covering the packing and distribution of bulk ripe olives in brine.

82. Cooperates with the U. S. Forestry Service in the maintenance of sanitation in the mountainous areas of the State.

83. Makes sanitary surveys of cities and towns, providing assistance in the installation and maintenance of sanitary facilities.

84. Provides assistance to local communities in problems related to domestic sewage disposal and the maintenance of pure domestic water supplies and general sanitation.

85. Makes special surveys of food producing and food dispensing institutions and enforces the provisions of the Food Sanitation Act.

86. Receives complaints involving sanitary problems that can not be solved under local auspices and provides assistance in their solution.

87. Makes industrial surveys to protect the health of workers, saving industry vast sums of money.

88. Conducts clinics for vaccination against small-pox, in cooperation with local health officers.

89. Provides facilities for the prevention of diphtheria by administration of toxin antitoxin.

90. Investigates fraudulent advertising of foods and drugs.

91. Controls the sale of devices used in treatment of disease.

92. Requires proper labeling of dietary foods—vitamin content, mineral properties, etc.

93. Establishes minimum standards for all types of food products.

94. Cooperates with Federal government in the enforcement of food laws.

95. Prohibits manufacturing of eyebrow and eyelash dyes that contain dangerous coal tar dyes.

96. Prohibits false advertising of drugs for use in treatment of incurable diseases.

97. Prevents the sale of venereal disease remedies for self-medication.

98. Requires placement of warning statement on all drugs that may be habit-forming.

99. Distributes top minnows for destruction of mosquito larvae to mosquito abatement districts and to local health departments that may desire to establish breeding pools.

100. Enforces laws that prohibit the public use of common drinking cups and common towels.

Organized society may purchase the extinction of the malarial mosquito. It may buy the eradication of the yellow fever mosquito, the rat of bubonic plague, the tick of spotted fever, the fly of sleeping sickness, or the louse of typhus fever, and it may purchase a successful food inspection. But it can not buy habits of personal hygiene that produce human health; that defend the individual from disease and postpone his death. It can not purchase health habits that give the individual resistance to disease, making it harder for him to become sick and easier to recover. It can not purchase the personal consciousness of individual obligation in the health affairs of the community that is essential to an effective defense of the community health.—T. A. Storey, M.D., Ph.D., on Physical Training.

MORBIDITY

Complete Reports for Following Diseases for Week Ending
December 23, 1939.

Chickenpox

452 cases: Berkeley 7, Emeryville 1, Oakland 18, Piedmont 4, San Leandro 1, Calaveras County 1, El Cerrito 10, Pittsburg 8, Richmond 2, Fresno 13, Willows 1, Humboldt County 1, Kern County 8, Bakersfield 3, Lassen County 1, Los Angeles County 11, Burbank 2, Culver City 1, Inglewood 4, La Verne 4, Long Beach 10, Los Angeles 25, Manhattan 8, Pasadena 2, Pomona 5, Santa Monica 1, Willits 3, Monterey County 9, Carmel 2, King City 5, Monterey 8, Salinas 1, Grass Valley 1, Orange County 5, Anaheim 1, Fullerton 1, Newport Beach 1, Santa Ana 14, Laguna Beach 3, Tustin 1, Plumas County 1, Riverside County 7, Corona 2, Elsinore 2, Riverside 14, Indio 11, Sacramento 4, San Bernardino County 3, San Bernardino 1, San Diego 2, San Francisco 38, San Joaquin County 11, Stockton 3, San Luis Obispo County 9, San Luis Obispo 3, Burlingame 1, Daly City 1, Santa Barbara County 3, Santa Barbara 2, Santa Clara County 9, Palo Alto 4, San Jose 2, Santa Cruz County 14, Santa Cruz 21, Shasta County 5, Redding 1, Sierra County 14, Siskiyou County 1, Solano County 6, Stanislaus County 10, Modesto 2, Sutter County 10, Tulare County 8, Lindsay 3, Ventura County 4, Santa Paula 3, Yolo County 7, Yuba County 3.

Diphtheria

27 cases: Oakland 1, Los Angeles 2, Sacramento 2, San Bernardino County 1, Colton 2, Redlands 1, San Bernardino 1, San Diego County 1, Chula Vista 1, National City 1, San Diego 5, San Francisco 1, San Joaquin County 1, Sunnyvale 2, Stanislaus County 1, Modesto 1, Tulare County 1, Tulare 1.

German Measles

9 cases: Berkeley 1, Los Angeles 1, Santa Ana 1, Perris 1, National City 1, San Diego 3, Visalia 1.

Influenza

132 cases: Richmond 5, Los Angeles County 7, Glendale 1, Long Beach 4, Los Angeles 11, Monrovia 1, Montebello 1, San Fernando 4, South Pasadena 3, Orange County 2, Anaheim 1, Santa Ana 1, Sacramento 2, San Bernardino County 2, Ontario 1, San Diego County 1, San Diego 1, Sonoma County 1, Stanislaus County 83.

Measles

194 cases: Emeryville 1, Butte County 1, Kern County 2, Los Angeles County 1, Glendale 1, Los Angeles 5, San Fernando 5, Monterey County 1, Brea 1, Santa Ana 5, Indio 1, Sacramento 1, Redlands 1, Upland 1, San Diego County 12, Chula Vista 3, National City 77, San Diego 59, San Joaquin County 10, Lodi 1, Stockton 1, San Luis Obispo 1, Redding 1, Tulare County 1, Ventura County 1.

Mumps

189 cases: Berkeley 23, Oakland 4, Butte County 1, Gridley 6, Fresno County 2, Fresno 1, Humboldt County 1, Kern County 3, Bakersfield 3, Los Angeles County 5, Arcadia 2, Long Beach 3, Los Angeles 8, Montebello 3, Pasadena 2, Pomona 1, Merced County 1, Carmel 1, Monterey 1, Orange County 1, Anaheim 10, Fullerton 1, Plumas County 3, Riverside County 1, Blythe 1, Indio 1, Upland 1, San Diego 4, San Francisco 20, San Joaquin County 1, Stockton 2, San Mateo County 1, Redwood City 1, San Mateo 8, Menlo Park 2, Santa Barbara 2, Santa Clara County 23, Mountain View 13, Palo Alto 6, San Jose 2, Vacaville 1, Sonoma County 1, Stanislaus County 1, Oakdale 1, Sutter County 4, Exeter 4, Yolo County 2.

Pneumonia (Lobar)

47 cases: Fresno County 3, Fresno 1, Humboldt County 1, Bakersfield 1, Los Angeles County 6, Burbank 2, El Monte 1, Long Beach 1, Los Angeles 12, San Fernando 1, Torrance 2, Merced County 1, Santa Ana 1, Sacramento County 2, Sacramento 1, San Diego 1, San Francisco 7, San Luis Obispo County 1, Yolo County 1, Yuba County 1.

Scarlet Fever

171 cases: Alameda County 1, Oakland 2, Butte County 4, Contra Costa County 1, Fresno County 5, Kern County 4, Lake County 2, Los Angeles County 16, Alhambra 1, Arcadia 1, Burbank 2, Inglewood 4, La Verne 1, Long Beach 1, Los Angeles 18, Montebello 1, Hawthorne 3, Monterey Park 1, Gardena 2, Mendocino County 1, Point Arena 1, Merced County 17, Merced 2, Orange County 3, Riverside County 6, Corona 1, Elsinore 1, Riverside 1, Sacramento County 2, San Bernardino County 1, Ontario 1, Redlands 1, San Bernardino 4, San Diego County 4, El Cajon 1, San Diego 3, San Francisco 10, San Joaquin County 1, Stockton 1, San Luis Obispo 3, Santa Barbara 3, Santa Clara County 2, Palo Alto 1, San Jose 3, Redding 1, Solano County 1, Sonoma County 4, Modesto 2, Tehama County 1, Tulare County 3, Exeter 1, Porterville 1, Visalia 1, Ventura County 5, Ventura 5, Yolo County 1, Marysville 1.

Smallpox

7 cases: Butte County 4, California 3.*

Typhoid Fever.

5 cases: Los Angeles 1, Merced County 1, San Benito County 1, San Francisco 1, Tulare County 1.

Whooping Cough

118 cases: Oakland 1, San Leandro 2, Fresno County 4, Los Angeles County 16, Arcadia 1, Los Angeles 24, Whittier 1, Merced County 1, Merced 4, Anaheim 1, Fullerton 1, Riverside County 3, Beaumont 2, San Jacinto 1, San Bernardino County 1, San Bernardino 4, San Diego 1, San Francisco 12, Menlo Park 1, Santa Barbara 1, Santa Clara County 9, Palo Alto 2, San Jose 3, Sonoma County 3, Stanislaus County 3, Tulare County 3, Lindsay 11, Visalia 1, Yuba County 1.

Dysentery (Amoebic)

3 cases: Claremont 1, Corona 1, Stockton 1.

Dysentery (Bacillary)

12 cases: Fresno County 1, Humboldt County 1, Lassen County 1, Los Angeles County 1, Los Angeles 2, San Francisco 4, San Joaquin County 1, Redding 1.

Leprosy

1 case: Kern County.

Poliomyelitis

8 cases: Alameda County 1, Oakland 1, Bakersfield 1, Los Angeles County 1, Hawthorne 1, Coronado 1, San Francisco 1, Porterville 1.

Tetanus

2 cases: Fresno County 1, Stockton 1.

Trachoma

2 cases: Riverside County.

Trichinosis

1 case: Fresno.

Jaundice (Epidemic)

4 cases: Lassen County.

Food Poisoning

2 cases: Los Angeles 1, Marysville 1.

Undulant Fever

4 cases: Contra Costa County 1, Monrovia 1, Salinas 1, Riverside County 1.

Tularemia

1 case: Humboldt County.

Actinomycosis

1 case: Salinas.

Coccidioidal Granuloma

1 case: Los Angeles.

Septic Sore Throat

1 case: Sacramento County.

Rabies in Animals

1 case: Long Beach.

* Cases charged to "California" represent patients ill before entering the state or those who contracted their illness traveling about the state throughout the incubation period of the disease. These cases are not chargeable to any one locality.

In these days, half our diseases come from the neglect of the body in the overwork of the brain. In this railway age the wear and tear of labor and intellect go on without pause or self-pity. We live longer than our forefathers; but we suffer more from a thousand artificial anxieties and cares. They fatigued only the muscles—we exhaust the finer strength of the nerves.—Bulwer.

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